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them; and the manners and habits peculiar to the inhabitants are, in fact, at this moment as little known as those of the South Sea islands.

Fingal's Cave, situated in the island of Staffa, is, we should suppose, familiar at least in name to the generality of our readers. The following description of St. Kilda, given by one of a company who recently visited the place, will, we are sure, gratify many.

"The steamer *Glenalbyn*, Daniel Mathieson commander, proceeded from Oban (a sea-port in Inverness, within a day's sail of Glasgow), on Saturday, the 26th, about eleven A. M. for the Spar Cave, calling at Tobermorey. On her arrival at the Spar Cave, the evening proved particularly propitious, and the passengers had an opportunity of visiting it, with preparations, by man-ropes, torches, &c.

"At day-light next morning she started for Loch-Appin, and arrived there about six o'clock, where all the passengers landed, and experienced one of the most splendid views imaginable. This romantic lake is celebrated in a note, by Sir Walter Scott, to his poem of the "Lord of the Isles;" but notwithstanding his incomparable powers of description, the sublimity of the scenery surpassed it in reality. Proceeding to Lochbraccadale, she received some young geologists, from whence she went to Lochnamaddy, and took on board a pilot, about three P. M. under whose guidance she proceeded through the very intricate Sound of Harris, studded with rocks; and after gaining the open sea, a beautiful expanse of ocean opened itself to the view of many, who then, for the first time, had witnessed the broad Atlantic without the view of land beyond. About midnight they arrived off St. Kilda. Owing to there being no person acquainted with the anchorage, Captain Mathieson advisedly let off the steam, and hove the vessel to under her sails. At daylight the steam was set on, and the vessel very soon approached the bay opposite to where the whole inhabitants of the island reside. At this time it was about four A. M. and the steamer fired off two of her cannon—the report of which aroused the natives, who issued from their dwellings like flocks of bees. As the *Glenalbyn* was the first steamer that ever touched at St. Kilda, its unwonted appearance, and the noise of escaping steam combined, led the natives simultaneously to flee to the steepest crags. In a short time, however, one of the party, more courageous than the others, slowly returned, and approached the minister's house, when, after remaining for some little time, he again went back, and headed them to the beach. St. Kilda is said by the poet to be upon the "*melancholy main*;" but to the visitors and visited, upon this occasion, it was a *joyous* scene in the extreme. Many of those who landed had previously provided themselves with quantities of tobacco, cotton handkerchiefs of gay patterns, &c.; the former of which they distributed liberally amongst the male part of the population, and the latter amongst the matrons and maids, some of whom, upon discovering themselves to be so unexpectedly adorned, actually shed tears of exultation.

"The population consists of twenty-one families, or ninety-three individuals, who have never increased for the last century. Many of them marry very young, and, of course, with near relatives, which may partly account for the apparent deterioration of the race. The clergyman's duties appear to be strictly confined to religious matters. The magisterial duties devolve upon the only individual in the island (with the exception of the minister) who speaks the English language, and who is employed by the proprietor as ground officer to collect the feathers, &c. which are given by the natives in lieu of rent, and who terms himself 'Baron Baillie.' His cast of countenance is rather intelligent, and he appears, from his air, to assume a considerable degree of authority, but in dress and otherwise he appears like the other natives. The houses, twenty-one in number, are collected close to each other, with very narrow passages between, and form a circle, at one side of which the Baron Baillie has a bench erected, where he holds courts once a week, and dispenses justice liberally.

"A house, remote from the others, has a lock on the door (the only one amongst the natives), where young

couples are placed in upon being married, and the door locked upon them for twenty-four hours; there are also several other houses at a distance, where the inhabitants store their feathers. At this season of the year they catch the fowl by descending the cliffs, suspended by a rope, composed of horse hair, which two or three persons hold above. The person capturing the birds has a piece of wood or branch, similar to a common fishing rod, to the end of which there is a piece of hair line, about a foot in length, formed into a running noose, which he places over the head of the bird, and by pulling it towards him the noose tightens upon the bird's neck, which he then unfastens, and takes in another. There is neither surgeon nor midwife in the island; and when children are born, they are fed for the first five days upon butter dissolved in milk, and should it happen to survive that period, it is then suckled. It is ascertained that only one out of ten passes the age of infancy. A natural transition leads us to proceed from the birth to the death—and on the occasion of a funeral, the whole population follow the body, in a direct line to the place of interment; but should the death be untimely (more especially by a fall from the cliffs), then what may be termed a Roman, or perhaps an Irish, howl takes place, and the natives abstain from every occupation for a period of three days. Their houses are in general built of loose stones, about five feet in height, and composed of great masses, usually from four to six feet in thickness, thatched with straw. Their beds, or rather places of repose, are, for the winter and spring months, in a recess within the before-mentioned thick walls, where a quantity of fog, without any covering, is laid. Before leaving, all the natives were invited on board to view the steamer, of which invitation the male part of the population accepted, but declined to allow the females to accompany them. On their being taken into the cabin, its splendour overcame them to such a degree, that many of them seemed inclined to kneel and worship. They asked if the ship belonged to the King, and whether or not he had any others, and if so large? But on being informed that his Majesty had vessels of four times the size, they appeared not to credit it; and several of them being shown their images in a large mirror, started with affright—one in particular, for on being asked if he thought it was his brother, he became still more alarmed, and said that he never had one in his life.

"About eight A. M. she sailed from St. Kilda, and proceeded back through the Sound of Harris, and then along the north of Long Island to Stornoway, where she arrived about ten o'clock, after experiencing a heavy sea, and strong breeze a-head; she then sailed, about one A. M. on Tuesday morning, for Oban, and called at Portree, where preparations were making for one of the Skye annual markets; from thence through the inner sounds, passing Egg and Rum, in the former of which is the celebrated cave described by Sir Walter Scott in one of his notes to the poem of the 'Lord of the Isles.' On arriving at Staffa, the evening proved to be particularly fine, and the passengers had every opportunity of exploring its varied wonders; and when the company sung the anthem of 'God save the King,' in Fingal's Cave, the effect was remarkably striking. Thereafter she proceeded to Iona, and it being then about sunset, the sublimity of the scenery, accompanied with associations of elevated emotions, caused the visit to be of peculiar interest. Several of the young gentlemen went ashore to enjoy the night at the inn. At daylight on Wednesday, the 30th, the vessel returned to Oban, and landed the whole of the passengers about eleven o'clock, A. M."

THE WRECKERS.

BY JAMES SHERIDAN KNOWLES.

We know not where the following story first appeared—whether in a Montreal paper, the Irish Advocate, from which we copy it, or somewhere else. At all events it is a good story.

It was a March morning—dark, yet without a drop of rain or breath of wind—that kind of marbly-black, compact sky, which is the sure forerunner of a storm. The night had been a raw and cold one—too cold to sleep with comfort in the open air; yet such was the chamber

which a peasant girl, a native of a little fishing hamlet upon the coast of Cornwall, had chosen for repose. Her couch was a hard and fearful one—the verge of a cliff that rose nearly a hundred feet perpendicular from the sea shore; and yet not the softest couch that ever was spread in hamlet, town, or city, contained a tenant, in form, for symmetry—in feature, for beauty, the mistress of her who occupied that strange, appalling place of rest. Her slumbers were disturbed, yet deep. Neither the full dawn could break them; nor yet the pressure of a hand that had taken hold of hers, nor the tears that fell upon her face from the eyes of one who was hanging over her—a young man about her own age, or a little older, and who seemed to belong to the profession of the sea.

"And hast thou slept out again all night?" he murmured, his tears still flowing. "And does it grow worse and worse with thy poor wits? and shall I never see the day when I can make thee my wife? They will not let me marry thee, because, as they say, thou art mad, and knowest not what thou dost; but when thy mind was sound, I was loved by thee! Had I married thee then, thou still hadst been my wife!—thou still hadst been cherished and loved! Why must I not marry thee now? I could watch thee then at night. My arms would enfold thee then, and prevent thee from stealing from thy bed to sleep in such a place as this."

The attachment which united this young man to the being whom he so pathetically apostrophized, was of that pure and steadfast nature which can never take root except in the unsophisticated heart. She had lost her reason in consequence of having been witness to a transaction of blood, which made her an orphan. She was to have been married to him; but, in the unfortunate state of her intellects, no clergyman would celebrate the rites. But she did not the less enjoy his protection. Beneath his mother's roof she lived as a sister—the object of a passion in which frustration, and almost hopelessness, had only produced increase of strength.

"Kate, Kate!" he called, "rouse thee. Don't be frightened; 'tis only William. Get up, and come home."

He offered to raise her, but she checked him—looked round and fixed her eyes inquiringly upon the sea.

"Where is it?" she exclaimed, her voice tremulous with intense emotion. "Where is the storm? I see the black sky, but I want the thunder and the wind; the white, white sea, and the big ship driving upon the reef; or is it all over? No," she added; "'tis coming—'twill be here; I see it."

She rose, and passively accompanied her watchful lover to his mother's cottage; where, leaving her under the custody of its mistress, the young man repaired on urgent business to a town at some distance from the hamlet.

That morning the storm came on; three days it continued—it was now the third day, a lee shore, a boiling sea, and on the coast of Cornwall. A wild and fearful offing. Foam, foam, foam, which way soever you looked—nothing but foam. Black reefs of rocks, that even in the highest spring tides were never completely covered, discernible now only by a spot here and there—so quick the breakers fell upon them. The spray flying over the cliffs, fifty, sixty, ay, a hundred feet and more, above the level of the sea, and spreading over the land for acres.—And all above pitch black, though at noonday. Every thing seemed to cower before the spirit of the storm—every thing except man. The shore—which consisted partly of huge masses of rock, partly of shingle—was lined with human beings; some in groupes, some alone, promiscuously furnished with boat-hooks, gaffs, grapples, hatchets and knives, ready to dispute with the waves the plunder of the fated ship that might be driven within the jaws of that inhospitable bay. Expectation glistened in their eyes, that kept eagerly prowling backward and forward, far and near, over the waste of waters—they were wreckers. Not a few women, as well as children, were among them; nor were these unprovided against the approach of the wished for prey—all seemed to have their appropriated places; from which, if they stirred, it was only a step or two, to be the next minute retraced. Little was spoken.

At one and the same moment almost every head was turned toward the cliff, at the wild and shrill hollow that wrung from it.

"'Tis only Kate," cried one, here and there, as the maniac rapidly descended by a crevice, which few of the lookers-on would have attempted, and that with wary feet.

"The crazy slut will break her neck," carelessly remarked one to another. But she was safe in her recklessness or unconsciousness of danger, and in a second or two stood among them.

"A lovely day—a fair, lovely day!" she exclaimed to the first she came up to. "Good luck to you! Any thing yet. No, no," she continued, replying to herself; "white to the north—white to the west—white to the south—all white; not a speck upon the water. But 'tis coming! 'tis coming! 'tis coming!" she reiterated, dropping her voice to her lowest pitch; "I saw it here last night—a big black hull—one mast standing out of three—cannons and stores overboard—rising and sinking—rocking and reeling—driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked seven cursed years ago: I saw it," she repeated, eyeing the standers-by with a look that dared incredulity; then all at once, her voice sinking into a whisper, "hist, hist!" she added; "'twill be a handfull or two for you—and a load for you—and more than one can carry for you," addressing this person and that successively; "casks, cases, chests, gear and gold—but what will it be for Black Norris? It will be a brighter day for him than for any of you. When do they say his time is out?"

"Whose time?" inquired one among the group she was addressing.

"One, two, three," she went on without noticing the question until she had counted seven: "his seven years were out last May; he was transported three years before his hopeful son murdered my father."

"Hush, you crazy wench," exclaimed those around her; "if Norris hears you, you may chance to take a swim in the creek where he is standing."

"Crazy!" she echoed. "Yes; bless heaven that made me so! It knows best what it does. I saw my father murdered, though his murderer saw not me; they were struggling which should keep possession of the prey. Old Norris's knife decided it! I was powerless with fright! I could not speak! I could not stir! I became mad, and the judge would not believe me! I could tell my story better now, but it would be of no use, for they say I am crazy still. There she is!" vociferated she, pointing toward the offing at the southern extremity of the bay.

"Where—where—where?" inquired her auditors.

"No, no," she resumed after a minute or two of silence, during which her eyeballs kept straining in the direction toward which she had pointed. "No," she resumed, dropping her hand: "but she is coming; and Black Norris will neither want roof nor board, gold or gear, to welcome back the father that bred him up to his own trade. But, where is he?" inquired she; "where, but upon the long reef where I saw him!" Saying this, she proceeded to the southern extremity of the bay.

A stalworth figure, in advance of the regular line, sat stationed upon the landward end of a huge reef of rocks, that gradually dipped into the sea. His hair, black and lank, thrown back from a swarthy, ill-favoured visage, hung half way down his shoulders; his eye, dark, small, and glistening bright, directed toward the sea, in quick and restless motion, was everywhere at once. A long boat-hook, clenched with both his hands, rested across his knees; and, in a belt, which encircled his waist, were stuck a clasp-knife of more than ordinary size, and a hatchet. The wave repeatedly washed more than half way up his lower extremities, but he paid no more heed than if he were a part of the rock that scattered it into mist.

"A lovely day—a fair, lovely day!" cried the maniac, approaching him. "How beest thou, Black Norris? Nay, I am good now," continued she, in a deprecating tone; "don't look angry. I'll never say again that it was you."

The wrecker moved his hand toward his knife.

"Stop, stop, Black Norris," cried she, coaxingly and hurriedly laying her hand upon his arm; "keep it for other work! You'll want it to-day; before night there will be a hull ashore. There will be need of knife, axe, hook and all; for the storm is lively, yet the sea shows not signs of going down—the breakers keep tumbling upon the shore. Mark how they sweep the shingles up, and back again! By-and-by they will have something else to roll. 'Tis coming, Black Norris! 'tis coming! A huge, black hull—one mast standing out of three—cannons and stores overboard—rising and sinking—rocking and reeling—driving full bump upon the reef where the William and Mary was wrecked; the very reef on which you stand, Black Norris! ay, and the very spot—!"

"Silence, jade!" exclaimed the wrecker, looking from beneath his hand, which, with the rapidity of lightning, was raised to his brow, and placed there horizontally, and leaning eagerly forward.

"In the south?"

"Yes."

"Just clear of the point?"

"Yes—the looming of something; 'tis a sloop—I see but one mast."

"'Tis a ship, Black Norris: the other two have been cut away."

"Peace, jade! what know'st thou of the matter?"

"'Tis a ship," she continued; "I told you so! There is the huge black hull!"

"'Tis there, indeed!" exclaimed the wrecker. "Art thou a witch as well as crazed? 'Tis there, indeed; she is diving right into the bay, coming broadside on."

A huge black hull it was; high out of the water, as if every article of weight that could be spared had been thrown over board. Reeling and pitching she came on, staggering every now and then at the stroke of some wave that broke over her. Fast was she nearing the shore.

"Now, now, now!" ever and anon exclaimed the wreckers; but she was floating still, so much had those on board lightened her. At length she was fairly among the breakers. She touched, and touched—yet went on; at last she struck, and a long continued crash came undulating upon the ears of the lookers-on, accompanied with halloos and shrieks. The shore was now all astir.

"That does for her!" exclaimed several voices all at once, as an enormous wave towering, as if charged with her doom, came foaming toward her. In another minute it broke upon her with a fury that sent the spray to the clouds, and totally hid her from the shore. When she became visible again, the whole of her larboard broadside was stove in. In a moment, men, women, and children were up to their middle in the surf. Another billow—she was gone! Planks, pulleys, spars, and cordage, now came floating in, and every one went to work—every one but Black Norris.

He kept his station upon the reef—a post which common consent seemed to have yielded up to him. No one ventured to dispute his right to it. In advance of him stood the maniac, constantly looking in one direction—a kind of cove produced by a forking in the reef. Thence she never took her eye, except to throw a glance at Black Norris whenever he made a movement, as if about to quit the stand which he had chosen.

"'Twill be here," she kept repeating; "'twill be here—that which will be worth the hull to thee, were it high and dry, and all thine own; wait for it—'tis sent to thee—'twill be here. Did I not tell you of the huge black hull, and came it not? As surely that will come, which in that hull was sent to thee. Be ready with thy boat-hook. The minutes are counted. The wave that is to bring it is rolling in. There it is! I know it! Here, take my place and be ready. Here it is—a body—hook it by the clothes! keep it clear of the rocks! Round—round—round here into this nook! Look if it does not lie there as if it were made for it! What think you now, Black Norris? What think you now of crazy Kate? Softly, softly," she continued, as the wrecker, substituting his hands for the instrument, began to draw the body up to the beach. "Softly—the pockets are full! Softly, least any should drop from them. That will do! that will do!"

Scarcely was the body clear of the surf when the wrecker began to rifle it. The pockets were full; one of them was speedily emptied, when a laugh from the maniac, who, squatting, sat gibbering at the head, arrested Black Norris in the act of examining the contents.

"What laugh'st thou at, jade?" he inquired.

"Go on," she replied—" 'tis a fair lovely day, as I told thee; is it not, Black Norris?"

"Peace, jade!" exclaimed the wrecker. "Jewels!" he ejaculated, closing a small case which he had opened. The maniac laughed again. "Wilt thou stop thy cursed mouth," vociferated the wrecker.

"Go on," murmured the maniac. "Go on, Black Norris! You should not be angry with me. Did I not tell you it was coming? Go on. 'Tis a fair lovely day; isn't it Black Norris?"

"Silence, again!" cried the wrecker. "Gold!" exclaimed he to himself, as he emptied into his hand a portion of the contents of a purse, which he had taken from the other pocket—"broad, heavy, yellow pieces!" Another laugh from the maniac.

"I tell thee what, mad Kate," roared out the wrecker, "take to thy heels, or abide the consequence, if thou utterest that sound again."

"Softly, softly!" whispered Kate; "he hears you."

"Who, jade?" cried the wrecker, starting from his knees.

"The owner of the diamonds and the gold. His lips have been moving for the last minute, and now they are wide open."

The wrecker just glanced at the face of the shipwrecked man.

"Get thee away, good Kate," said he, in a conciliatory tone. "Go, Kate; leave me by myself, and I'll never be angry with thee again. Go, good Kate; go."

The maniac looked at the wrecker for a moment—smiled—nodded her head significantly, and rose.

"I am gone, Black Norris," she cried. "A good day to you! and a good fair day it is! and a lovely day! Isn't it, Black Norris? I'll leave you by yourself—I'll not stay—I'm gone!" and starting toward the pathway which led up the cliff, and the commencement of which was sheltered by a screen of rock, she was quickly out of sight.

The wrecker now began to reconnoitre all around him. Every one was engrossed with his own occupation, securing such portions of the wreck, or such articles of property, as were brought within his reach. His hand approached his knife—grasped it—half drew the weapon from his belt; but suddenly replaced it, and now fastened on the axe—the counterpoise to the blades of which was a wedge-like piece of iron, broad and flattened at the end. In a second the instrument swung by his side. Once again he reconnoitred toward the beach; then turned toward the prostrate man. He thought the body moved—he trembled from head to foot. He advanced a single step, but stopped—the fingers were in motion! A low sound—half voice, half breath—issued from the throat, which now evidently began to work. He advanced another step, though a tottering one—another—another! He was now within a foot or two of the head—he sank, or rather dropped upon one knee. The eyes of the seaman moved—they turned to the right and to the left, and at last glared back upon the wrecker! Both hands now clenched the axe. Slowly it was lifted, the edge averted, and the blunt end suspended over the forehead of him that lay. It was raised! It hovered a moment or two, then fell with a short, dull crash—a pause for a moment or two more—limb, eye, everything were still—the wrecker threw his weapon behind him, and wiped from his brow the drops that stood thick upon it.

"Ha, ha! you have done it!"

The wrecker turned, and beheld the maniac standing behind him with the hatchet in her hand, her eyes flashing.

"Nay, move not, Black Norris!" she continued, "unless you would have me give the corpse a fellow! Let me get farther from thee without forcing me to do thee a mischief, and I will tell thee something!" She retreated

about twenty paces, without turning her back; the wrecker now perfectly unnerved not daring to move. "Black Norris!" she resumed, "did I not tell thee that it was a fair, lovely day?—and a fair, lovely day it is—and a bouny one, too! And know you not why, Black Norris? This day you have done, what you have done!—and this day seven years was the day, the fair lovely day, when you murdered my father, Black Norris! Now, follow me not, but good-by."

She fled. The wrecker had no power to follow.

By the fire of a miserable hut, was seated, upon a stool, a female, of youthful but haggard appearance. She had an infant at her breast, and was endeavouring to lull it, rocking to and fro, with a low melancholy hum. Every now and then she paused and listened, and, after a second or two, resumed her maternal task.

"Be quiet, Shark! be quiet!" she would occasionally cry, as a lean, black, rough-coated dog, between the Newfoundland and the mastiff, and which was stretched across the hearth, would raise his head, and, turning it in the direction of the door, keep howling amidst the gusts of the storm, which was slowly and fitfully subsiding.

At length the infant fell asleep, and was transferred from its mother's lap to a wretched pallet in an adjoining room. Her charge being thus disposed of, she returned into the outer apartment. A cooking-vessel was on the fire. She lifted the lid. The steam faintly rose from the contents.

"Will never grow hot!" she impatiently exclaimed, and resorting to a bellows, through the creviced sides of which escaped the greater portion of the wind which was intended for the proper vent, proceeded assiduously, but also in vain, to urge the sluggish fuel. "He'll brain me, if he comes home and nothing ready," she cried to herself, in a querulous under-tone. "Heaven send him luck, and I shall have peace for a day or two," continued she. "But for my baby, I wish I had never seen the face of Black Norris."

"Let me in," cried the wrecker at the door.

"Thank heaven, he has met with luck," ejaculated the wretched wife.

She let him in. He had a trunk upon his shoulder, and under his arm he carried a bundle of clothes.

"Good luck, Norris?" tremulously, and half doubtingly, inquired she.

"Yes," was his sullen reply. "Why do you ask with such a face as that?"

"I was afraid you had not met with any."

"Why?" demanded he, sternly.

"From your looks," timidly responded she.

"Curse thee," muttered the ruffian; "what business hast thou to mind my looks? Here, lend a hand, and help this load from my back." The trunk was deposited upon the floor. "What, nothing ready? Hast thou not victuals in the house? Hast thou not fire? Hast thou not hands? and why is not my dinner ready? Bestir thee, I have something to do in the next room. On thy life let me not be disturbed till I have done. Haste. Give me the key of the big chest."

"Don't wake the baby," intreatingly enjoined the wife. "He has not slept the whole morning, and is only just now dropped off."

"Curse the child," cried the wrecker. "Thou thinkest of nothing but the child. Look to my dinner." He went into the next apartment, shut the door after him, and bolted it.

He examined the jewels again. He emptied the purse of its contents and counted them. He opened the rest of the pockets. The trowsers he had taken from the bundle and thrown upon the floor of the other room—all contained riches. He placed them upon the ground, applied the key, and hastily began to deposit them in the bottom of the chest. In the progress of his work, he started and stopped short, at a shuffling of feet which he heard in the outer apartment, accompanied by the sound of voices, as of persons speaking in a low key. Muttering a curse he proceeded.

"Norris, Norris," whispered his wife at the door. He replied not, but went on,

"Norris," she whispered again. "You are wanted." He answered not, but listened anxiously—all was silent.

"Norris!" she repeated.

"Silence, and confound thee!" was the ruffian's reply.

"I cannot help it, Norris!" rejoined she, still whispering. "You are wanted, husband! O come! Do come!"

"Presently!" he vociferated. The last article was put in. He locked the chest, and unbolting the door, threw it open.

"Well, is my dinner ready?" he noisily demanded, entering the outer apartment, and looking toward the table—which had been constructed out of the fragments of a wreck—a corpse lay stretched upon it. At the head and at the foot was a group of his neighbours. He stood for a moment or two transfixed.

"What means this?" at length he boldly inquired, with a loud voice, striving to conceal a cowering heart.

"Merciful powers!" exclaimed one, lifting the rifled trowsers, which the wrecker had thrown upon the floor. "Merciful powers! if it is not your father's body, Norris, that you have been stripping."

"My father's body?" echoed Black Norris, the blood utterly forsaking his cheeks.

"Yes, there it is stretched upon the table!"

Black Norris did not attempt to speak. He looked at the body—at the by-standers—at his wife—at the body again—with an expression of utter vacuity in his countenance. He then approached the table, half seated himself on a corner of it, his back to the corpse; and with one leg upon the floor, kept swinging the other, looking wildly around him. His wife, who had dropped upon the stool on which she had been nursing her child, sat the image of horror. The rest kept silence.

"It can't be helped!" at last exclaimed Black Norris. "The dead have no use for clothes. We'll bury him tomorrow, and wake him to-night."

His auditors looked at one another, but made no remark. Pipes, tobacco, and spirits, were speedily procured and placed upon the same table with the corpse, which was now covered with a sheet. Black Norris seated himself at the head. His neighbours, whose numbers were now increased by occasional droppers-in, accommodated themselves as they could with stools, empty kegs placed on end, and pieces of plank converted into temporary forms, sat ranged around. The room waxed merry, save where the wrecker's wife sat crouching near the fire, her head supported by the wall. At length the first supply of spirits was out.

"I'll bring you better," cried the wrecker. "What we have been drinking was watered, I'll bring it to you as pure as from the still."

He disappeared; and, after a lapse of about ten or fifteen minutes, returned with a fresh supply. He opened the door unobserved, but stopped short upon remarking that the place which he had just quitted, was occupied by three or four who were intently employed in examining the head of the dead body, from which the sheet had been partially removed. The rest of the company were leaning forward, apparently absorbed in what was passing.

"'Tis an ugly mark!" said one.

"No rock could do that!" observed another.

"No!" interposed a third; "'tis more like the blunt end of an axe-head; see! here is the regular mark of the edge all round. I would not be Black Norris for all he has got by this day's work!"

"Why not?" vociferated the wrecker, springing forward and confronting the speaker.

Every eye was turned toward the wrecker, in whose countenance desperation and gathering fury were fearfully depicted. No answer was returned to his question.

"Why not!" repeated he, with increased vehemence.

"Why not?" echoed the young man, recovering from temporary surprise. "Why, who was it stov'd your father's forehead in, Black Norris?" added he, after a pause.

He had scarcely time to duck his head. The vessel which the wrecker carried flew over it, and in the next moment the young man's throat was in the ruffian's gripe.

"Loose your hold of him," cried several all at once. Black Norris paid no heed to them. Three or four of the strongest and boldest rushed together upon him at once; overpowered him and rescued his almost suffocated victim. The wrecker drew his knife and brandished it. They rushed upon him again before he had time to make a stroke with it, and wrenched it from him. His wife, who, it appeared, had retired into the inner apartment during the interval of her husband's absence, now burst from it, sank on her knees before him, and, clasping him round the legs with one arm, while with the other she supported her infant, implored him to be calm. A blow levelled the child and mother to the earth. With horror of the savage act, the spectators stood awhile, as if bereft of the power of speech or motion. For a second or two the wrecker glared around him like a fiend, then suddenly vanished into the inner room. He searched here and there, blaspheming all the time, cursing this thing and that thing, as anything came to his hand except what he wanted. At length, however, he succeeded in finding his pistols. Then a pouch filled with slugs; and, last of all, a powder-horn presented themselves. Hastily he loaded and primed the weapons, and proceeding to the door with one in each hand, advanced a pace into the outer apartment.

"Now," roared the wrecker—"now, who is the man to come on?" No one stirred. "I give you just as much time," continued he, "as it will take you to clear the house. When that is expired, I fire at the man that remains."

A wild, shrill, piercing laugh was the answer to his menace. It came from the head of the corpse. The maniac was standing there. The wrecker's axe was in her hand—the blunt end resting on the mark in the dead man's forehead.

"Ha, ha!" she cried exultingly, "there is your father, Black Norris, a corpse upon the plank of wood, to get possession of which, you murdered my father; and here is your axe upon the mark which you made in your father's forehead when I told you, as you were rifling him on the beach, that his eyes were moving, and you coaxed me to leave you alone with him. See how nicely it fits. But I knew you, and stole back. I did, Black Norris. And I saw the blow, and heard the crash, and snatched up your hatchet when you threw it behind you; and ran away with it. Give you joy of your diamonds and your gold, Black Norris. A fair day, is it not? A fair, lovely day—a fair, lovely, bonny day."

The wrecker had been gradually raising his right arm. It was now nearly brought to a level. He fired—but the charge perforated the roof. His arm was struck up by some one, and at the same moment he felt himself powerfully pinioned. He looked round; he found himself in the hands of four of the preventive guard, accompanied by Kate's lover, with a staff of a boarding-pike in his grasp.

That day, having completed the business which called him from home, had the young man returned. His first inquiry was for Kate. She had been at her usual pranks, and had stolen away. He sought her in all her haunts—she was no where to be found—dispirited and fatigued too, for he had walked upward of thirty miles since morning, he was repairing home, when he received from a group returning from the wreck, and of whom he made inquiries after her, an account of her appearance among the wreckers, and her wild, mysterious prophecy, which had been so strangely fulfilled. Revolving what he had heard, he lifted the latch of his mother's door and entered; but stopped short. A female, almost naked to the zone, was sitting with her back toward him; her skin of so pure a whiteness, that it fairly shone. The waist and shoulders of such a mould, as of itself apprises the beholder of the presence of surprising richness; although unrefined, uninformed, he is utterly at a loss to tell in what it lies. A moment he stood—then, abashed, confounded, he was on the point of retiring, when the female turned suddenly round.

"Kate!" burst in astonishment from the young man's lips.

The next moment the maniac, unconscious of her

situation, was hanging upon his neck. "Wikly she kissed him, straining him to her bosom, and laughing.

"He has done it—he has done it!" she almost shrieked. "He has murdered his own father. Here is the hatchet by which he beat his forehead in," added she, springing from him to the other end of the room, and snatching up the instrument and flourishing it; her sun-burnished hands and neck forming an extraordinary contrast with the snow, which had never been before revealed to the eyes of her lover, whose mother now entering from an adjoining room with some articles of apparel upon her arm, hastily retired again, drawing the poor, half-resisting girl along with her. The former presently returned.

"She has been down on the shore all day. There has been a wreck," said she. "About a quarter of an hour ago she came in, inquiring for you, that you might take Black Norris, as she said, and hang him, for he had murdered his father. She was wet to the skin with the spray and the rain, and I was making her change herself when you came in. Hist—she is here."

Kate entered. Her lover looked at her. Nothing appeared now, but the hue that was the child of the weather. The hatchet was in her hand. Exultation and impatience were painted in her looks.

"Come, come," she cried; and opening the door, at once led the way to Black Norris's. Scarcely had they got fifty yards from the house, when, at a turn in the road, they came upon four privates of the preventive service. The men were on duty. Kate instantly accosted them, related the transaction which had taken place upon the reef, and commanded them to accompany her. They looked—and obeyed. * * *

Three weeks after, there was a trial and an execution. Black Norris was the criminal. Among the spectators at the latter were a young man and a young woman. As soon as the body swung in the air, a shrill peal of laughter arose from the crowd. It was from the female, who, the next moment, lay fainting in the arms of her companion. Kate was conveyed home. She was restored to consciousness; but her mind, so highly excited before, seemed now to have sunk into a state of infantine imbecility. Thus she remained for several days, nay weeks. A gloom seemed to have overspread her lover's mind, which threatened consequences similar to those under which the being whom he so tenderly loved had laboured. He avoided society—he would hardly exchange a word, even with his mother. He was continually wandering about the cliff and the shore alone.

One day, when he had thrown himself upon the very spot, where, as we related in the beginning, he had intruded upon the slumbers of the maniac, revolving the cause which now utterly absorbed his mind and soul, and lost to external consciousness, he was startled by something falling on his face. He looked up, and saw the loved one hanging over him. The tear-drop stood trembling on his bed—the light of reason beamed from her eye. She pronounced his name, talked to him of her father's death, informed him that she believed his murderer had suffered the penalty of his crime, but knew not when, or by what means. He drew her softly toward him—encouraged her to speak on—questioned her—found that of all that had passed since her wits had gone astray, the only circumstance which had left an impression upon her memory was the fate of Black Norris. He now endeavoured to ascertain the state of her heart with respect to him. An eye, at once cast down—a burning cheek—lips that made soundless motion—confirmed the dearest hopes, and crowned the most ardent wishes of his soul. Reason was perfectly reinstated—love had never lost its seat. He urged the soft confession—and her face was buried in his bosom. In a week she was his wife and, along with his mother, accompanied him to a distant part of the country, lest old and painful recollections might be recalled by the presence of familiar scenes.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCE.

At one of the late meetings of the British Association, Dr. Roe, of Cavan, stated, that he was called some time back to visit the daughter of a farmer residing at Drum, in the County of Cavan; the girl had been attacked